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Carte Italiane

Title

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Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4vf8r8f5>

Journal

Carte Italiane, 1(8)

ISSN

0737-9412

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Publication Date

1987

DOI

10.5070/C918011256

Peer reviewed

Dal giardino dei bei fiori

In a letter written in 1443 by Gregorio Correr, Venetian patrician, humanist and theologian, to Cecelia Gonzaga, daughter of the Duke of Mantua, he advised the young girl toward a life of chastity, saying,

O excellent gift of God! O virginity akin to the angels and consecrated in the Virgin Mother and in the Virgin's Son. You are the road to heaven, the enemy of demons, the ornament of the soul. . . . If you are a bride of Christ, 'forget thy people and thy father's house'. . . . Flee, Cecelia, virgin of Christ, flee, cover your eyes, cover your ears. Flee, if you can, . . . 'For the flesh lusts against the spirit' . . .¹

Willingly she did flee, entering a convent in 1444.

Indeed, during the Renaissance, the possession of chastity and virginity were a young girl's most valued possessions. The Church preached its dictum of purity for young women as the highest aspiration for those of the fairer sex. And yet, as Boccaccio explained in his biography of Sabina Poppaea, one of 104 alleged biographies of women in *De claris mulieribus*, purity and modesty were difficult to maintain. Of Sabina he wrote, "It was her custom to show modesty assiduously in public, while in private she practiced lasciviousness, the universal vice of women."² Further, he writes, "excessive softness, the flattery, wantonness, and tears . . . are a woman's certain and deadly poison for the souls of men who trust them."³ Women, against their true wanton nature, then, were to emulate the example set by the Virgin Mary and to be obedient, chaste and modest.

But from the setting which produced these moralistic paradigms for women also came a large group of surprising images of women. These

pictures all have certain characteristics in common. They are intimate, half-length portraits of females with their light-colored hair worn loose and flowing, with their white underblouse or *camicia* open, revealing an expanse of very white skin and either both breasts, one breast, or sometimes just deep cleavage. Their clothes are in a state of *déshabillé*, and they are glancing either boldly out at the viewer or else looking modestly down. They sometimes hold draperies to their chest in a futile attempt at modesty. In a few of the pictures, the girls are shown holding flowers in one hand—or are shown with flowers in their hair. These pictures have come to be called depictions of the goddess Flora, whom the Sabines recognized as the divinity of flowers and springtime. It is with these so-called depictions of Flora, along with the group of which I will argue they are a part, that I will be concerned in this article.

Focusing on Titian's *Flora* (ca. 1515) and Palma Vecchio's *La Flora*, painted around the same time, I will ask why some of these depictions of young women in various stages of *déshabillé* were given the name of *Flora*, and whether these "Fiori" were different from the rest of these pictures. I will also ask, given the moralistic tenor of the times and its concern with chastity and virginity, who would have commissioned such pictures and why.

I will argue that the paintings identified as Flora were part of a group of pictures of girls done in Venice in the first half of the cinquecento and that this identification may or may not have been given to the painting by the artist, the possibility existing that it was a later, or secondary title affixed to the picture. I will also argue that these young women can be recognized by their hair and clothing as ladies of dubious reputation, the courtesans or prostitutes of cinquecento Venice, echoing Boccaccio's story of Flora, from Lactantius, as a Roman courtesan posing as the goddess of flowers. I will further suggest that these women had a desire to represent themselves as goddesses, or as larger-than-life images of female beauty, and that they willingly posed for these idealized portraits of themselves to further their reputations as symbols of sensual love.

Nothing that these pictures show girls in an intimate state of *déshabillé* for the times, and that they were often copied and distributed, I will conclude that these paintings were commissioned and sold as erotically-appealing boudoir pictures of idealized, beautiful

young women to be hung and displayed for the personal delectation of their male audience. The name of *Flora* affixed to some of them may have arisen from their pose holding a flower, or their pose with one breast uncovered, recalling Alcamenes' *Venus Genetrix*, which was almost the symbol for a goddess in Renaissance painting.

Both Titian's *Flora*, painted around 1515 (Fig. 1) and Palma Vecchio's *La Flora*, dated approximately the same time (Fig. 2), are generally thought to have been inspired by earlier paintings of *Flora* done by Leonardo da Vinci and artists working with him.⁴ While the *Floras* from Leonardo's school are still timeless in their depictions, the Venetian *Floras*, by their clothing and hairstyles, seem to belong more directly to a group of female half-length figures popular at the same time, in the early cinquecento. These pictures, of which there are many, show young beautiful girls with their hair down and with their clothing loosened in sensual disarray, usually with their breasts partially exposed. The images are overtly sensual and while partaking vaguely of classical allusions, have an air of contemporary nonchalance, some more so than others.

The flower held occasionally by one of these young women, as in the cases of Titian's *Flora* and Palma Vecchio's *La Flora*, is not the focus of the picture and in fact, most of the young ladies are not holding flowers at all, but instead are clutching a drapery, sitting with arms folded, pressing their hand to their bosom, holding a perfume bottle, or casually leaning on a chair. If the title of *Flora* had not been attached to the few pictured holding flowers, they would easily blend into this larger group of paintings of young girls.

Indeed, it is not clear that the name "Flora" was given to these pictures by the artists who painted them, for the provenance of both of the paintings here being considered is very sketchy. In fact, we have no contemporary reference to Titian's *Flora* at all, and therefore cannot establish for certain that Titian himself called it *Flora*.⁵ Palma Vecchio's *La Flora* was only first attributed to him by Berenson in 1894. Its traditional title of *La Flora* had been kept because of its resemblance in pose and attitude to Titian's *Flora*, leading some historians to speculate that Palma Vecchio had seen Titian's painting in Venice and drew inspiration from it.⁶ Whatever the case may have been, here, as in the

Titian painting, there are no contemporary referents to the painting. Indeed, of this larger group of "female half-length figures," as Held called them in his article on Flora, most of them carry the title of "Portrait of a Young Lady," with an occasional variation.⁷

We do know that many portraits of ladies, of which I am arguing that these "Fiori" are a part, were painted and sought after. Charles Hope has said in his book on Titian that there was a distinct, local tradition in Venice of painting pretty girls in a portrait format "either clothed or partially nude," and that these girls were either the man's mistress, or, further removed, simply pretty pin-ups.⁸ Ridolfi referred to a poem by Bernardo Tasso "invitando Titiano, a far l'effigie d'una sua Favorita."⁹ Vasari wrote that "for the Florentine, [not otherwise identified] . . . Titian painted a very beautiful portrait of a lady whom that nobleman loved when he was in Venice," who, in return, "honoured Titian with a superb sonnet. . . ."¹⁰

Whatever the personal identity of the girls in the portraits may have been we can tell something about them by the manner in which they are portrayed. First of all, they are shown with their hair loose and flowing, denoting abandon and vanity. The patron saint of prostitutes, Mary Magdalene, is usually depicted with long, sensuous hair.¹¹ Also, as Emma Mellencamp said in her article in 1969, the long golden hair is an antique referent echoing the nymphs of classical antiquity. These girls are also shown in their *camicia*, a blouse-like undergarment, in which, as Mellencamp also stated, ladies of the sixteenth century never appeared in public, especially not with their breasts exposed.¹² She was writing to refute earlier speculation by Jacob Burckhardt that these pictures of young girls were made as wedding pictures and that these were, in fact, Renaissance brides.¹³

Certainly, as we look at the variations among this genre, seeing Titian's *Flora* and Palma Vecchio's *La Flora* as a part, these girls do not look like brides. In an age when the virginity and chastity of a wife were of paramount concern, a depiction such as this would be very unlikely. From the moralists and Church fathers of the day came the same message: all that mattered for a girl was to keep her virginity. Saint Ambrose, writing in the fourth century, was one of the first Church fathers to extol virginity as a virtue. A letter written by Michelangelo to his



FIG. 1. Titian, *Flora*, Florence, Uffizi

nephew Lionardo in 1549 echoed the same concern. He wrote, in part: "If you wish to take a wife . . . I can at least tell you not to go after money, but only after goodness and a good reputation. . . ." ¹⁴ In fact, Pietro Aretino, writing five years later, opined, "It would be well if women died when they were still young, for there is no doubt that they are good and innocent when they are tender babes." ¹⁵

If, in fact, these women pictured were not then "Renaissance brides," who were they, why were they sometimes pictured as Flora, and why were their breasts exposed? A few speculations can be forwarded: that these pictures were of the mistresses of the painters (as later generations sometimes called them, for example, "Titian's Mistress as Flora"), or that they were pictures of prostitutes or courtesans who posed for the pictures to further their own purposes, and to add charm to the walls of male patrons.

Certainly, in the case of Titian, we know of his social dalliance, in spite of his marriage, with at least one famous, or perhaps infamous Venetian courtesan, La Zaffetta. Titian formed part of the group called "The Triumvirate" by many historians (including Crowe and Cavalcaselle), his "compeers" Pietro Aretino and Jacopo Sansovino rounding it out. That they led a life composed of "quiet dissipation attendant on mirthful company and fine suppers," meeting "either in Titian's rooms at Biri, or in Aretino's palace on the Grand Canal," has also been noted by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, and they often had company. ¹⁶ In a letter to Titian in December 1547, Aretino wrote, "a pair of pheasants and I don't know what other delicacies will be waiting for you if you dine with Angela Zaffetta and myself." ¹⁷ In another letter of Aretino's, he described the interior of a rich man's house, noting all the exotic pets from dogs to birds and monkeys, and finally spoke of the books, paintings and opulent kitchen. He then wrote, "Nor do I mention the nymphs, who with their presence surpass all the marvels I have described." ¹⁸

Lest we dismiss Aretino as an isolated case, let us look at Titian himself. Hope cited a letter from Tebaldi to Alfonso d'Este. The Duke had wanted Titian to accompany him to Rome, and Titian had begged off, saying that he was ill. The Duke's ambassador wrote to Alfonso saying:

I have been to see Titian, who has no fever at all: he looks well, if somewhat exhausted; and I suspect that the girls whom he often paints in

different poses arouse his desires, which he then satisfies more than his limited strength permits; but he denies it. . . .¹⁹

We can question the veracity of this story about Titian's relationship to his models, but even thirty years later, Aretino, in a letter to Sansovino, writes:

What makes me really marvel at him is that, whenever fair ladies he sees, and no matter where he is, he fondles them, makes a to-do of kissing them, and entertains them with a thousand juvenile pranks, but goes no further.²⁰

He was, after all, at least sixty-five years old at this time.

Georgina Masson, in her book on courtesans, related that a prostitute named Honorada had a poem written to Titian, saying of her, "no doubt Honorada hoped that he might thus be inspired to paint a picture of her, as he did of so many courtesans."²¹ While we have no direct evidence that these pictures we have been considering were actually paintings of prostitutes or courtesans (any such identification having been given at a later date), we do know something about the women who were courtesans.

These girls began their careers at the age of about fourteen, usually through the assistance of their mothers, and were "set up" by a wealthy suitor.²² That many of these young prostitutes cultivated literary men to guard against being badly written about has been noted by Masson. Indeed one such courtesan, Tullia d'Aragona, had alienated Aretino and either he or Lorenzo Veniero, who worked as his secretary, penned *La Tariffa della Puttane di Venetia* in 1535, in which poor Tullia was described as "the most abject of whores."²³ A kindlier gentleman then reportedly rescued her status by casting Tullia as his main character in his *Dialogo dell'Amore*, which came out in 1536–37.²⁴ Angela Zaffetta, who we have already seen dining with Aretino, Titian and Sansovino, was herself the object of a pair of indecent poems, *La Puttana Errante* and *Il Trentuno*, which referred to a lady's punishment at the hands of her clients if she was unruly.²⁵ The lady was "sequestered" and raped by thirty-one men, or in some extreme cases, was subjected to a "*trentuno reale*" which involved seventy-nine men. Supposedly, La Zaffetta had survived a *trentuno reale* herself.²⁶ It was definitely in a courtesan's best interests to be on good terms with the men who knew her, and to be portrayed in the best light possible.



FIG. 2. Palma Vecchio, *La Flora*, London, National Gallery

What distinguished a courtesan from a prostitute was, quite simply, the amount of money she made from being talented, beautiful and clever with music and poetry, and not necessarily in that order. The very successful ones attained the status of courtesan, and there was even a hierarchy within that. But the question still remains, were these the young women depicted in the paintings of Flora, and in the larger group of pictures of which I am suggesting that Floras were a part?

The special look of a courtesan was widely known, and it strikingly resembles the girls in these half-length pictures. The ideal of beauty for these women was lyricized in poetry. In *Il Vanto della Cortigiana Ferrarese* by Giambattista Verini, cited by Georgina Masson, an ideal courtesan is described as having coral lips, an alabaster neck, golden hair, firm young breasts, white hands, small feet and a "plump soft body made for pleasure." She should also be very young, fourteen to sixteen years of age.²⁷ Any deficit in these attributes could be made up for by employing the services of a *ruffiana*, a female servant sought after by the more successful and calculating of these young ladies, who was a sort of beauty specialist, knew hairstyling and fashion, and could camouflage defects and advancing age.²⁸ That the use of cosmetics and a rage for blonde, or "titian-colored" hair was wide-spread among a certain group of women is evident from the sermons of San Bernardino da Siena, among others, who spent most of his life travelling between the Italian city-states preaching. He railed out against excessive fashions, cosmetics, high heels, and bleaching one's hair in the sun, or in other words, "repudiating God's intention, by altering your looks."²⁹ San Bernardino's sermons were well-attended, and that courtesans and prostitutes regularly went to church was noted by Masson, who wrote that many attended services accompanied by an entourage of servants to show themselves off.³⁰

That these young professional girls would also want to show themselves off in a portrait of idealized beauty, or even as a goddess, is also a possibility. Certainly the height of their shoes, called *chopines*, elevated them to new heights, sometimes as much as eighteen inches.³¹ The spectacle of these rouged, gowned and bedecked young beauties, raised to icon size in the streets and *palazzi* of Venice, must have been impressive. The word "goddess" in everyday parlance, to denote the

lady of your affections, was also almost as commonplace, especially if she were a professional beauty. In a letter to one "La Basciadonna," dated April 1548, Aretino wrote, "My lady Marina, . . . There is no need to tell you that you are a goddess, but rather to adore you as one." Another letter, written to a male friend: "But now let us talk about my goddesses. Their favors, you say, have taken me captive."³²

Indeed, it seems as though Aretino's goddesses may partake rather specifically of the goddess Flora's attributes. In Palma Vecchio's *La Flora*, the goddess holds out a handful of primroses to the viewer. Primroses, called *primule* in Italian, are one of the first flowers to bloom in the spring. According to Bauhinus, the primrose was also called "St. Peter's Key" or "Key to Heaven" in *De Plantis*.³³ Titian's *Flora* offers her viewer a handful of pink and white roses, which in the Renaissance were symbolic of pride and triumphant love.³⁴ As Levi d'Ancona wrote on the iconography of flowers in the Renaissance, "when an artist uses exclusively one plant and places it prominently in a work of art, then it is likely that this motif may have been selected for its symbolic connotation."³⁵ Certainly, these two readings, the primrose as the key to heaven, and the rose as pride and triumphant love, would not be inconsistent with the character of Flora.

Flora, the Sabine divinity of flowers, springtime and love, was first identified with the Greek nymph Chloris by Ovid (*Fasti*, V, 183ff.)³⁶ As Julius Held noted in his article on Flora, she was taken up by the Romans as the goddess of springtime and has closely been associated with Venus, goddess of love and desire.³⁷ But in another reading of Flora, as Held further noted, Boccaccio had later identified her, in his *De claris mulieribus*, as a Roman courtesan who tricked the Senate into holding games in her honor by lavishly sponsoring them with her ill-gotten gains. This more earthly reading of Flora, emphasizing her immorality as opposed to her sensual qualities, was based not on Ovid, but on the writing of Lactantius and others who attacked the pagan tradition from whence she had sprung, and these works were well-known in the Renaissance.³⁸

The quattrocento poet Politian, part of Lorenzo de' Medici's circle in Florence, and also Lorenzo himself, wrote *rime* celebrating the erotic nature of the goddess and her relationship to Zephyrus, god of the west wind (Politian, *Stanze* I, 68; and Lorenzo de' Medici, "Selve d'Amore").³⁹ Zephyrus, in E. Wind's reading, had possessed Flora when

she was still the virginal nymph Chloris, transforming her into Flora and claiming her as his wife.⁴⁰ Into the cinquecento, Natalis Comes, in his *Mythologiae* (1851), called Zephyrus the messenger of Venus, writing that “omnia verno aeris tepore ad procreationem excitantur,” associating the warm wind of Zephyrus with love-making.⁴¹

A courtesan of this time, especially in Venice, could well see herself as embodying the dual characteristics of this goddess/prostitute associated with love and flowers. Even if these depictions of Flora were not illustrative of any specific text in this regard, that this traditional reading of Flora was known is evident. The idea that during the Renaissance, the portrayal of a woman with one breast exposed (in the manner of Alcamenes' *Venus Genetrix*), became a symbol for a goddess of classical antiquity, was put forth by Wethey in his work on Titian.⁴² But whether one can read all of these pictures as portrayals of goddesses, the ones holding flowers specifically as the goddess Flora, is problematical. However, as E. Wind has written, even if one cannot directly establish a link between a literary reading and a picture, one *can* connect a taste and mood and a “community of literary interests” in a specific time and place. All things antique were especially in vogue during this time in the Renaissance.⁴³ The houses of courtesans were decorated with mythological subjects and could even be sumptuous, according to Bandello's *Novelle*:

In the boudoir, where she retired when she [Imperia, a Roman courtesan] was going to receive some great personage, the walls were covered with hangings of cloth of gold, embroidered all over and falling in rich folds. Above the hangings there was a cornice decorated with gold and ultramarine. On the cornice stood beautiful vases of various precious substances—alabaster, porphyry, serpentine . . . Ranging round the room were many chests and coffers, richly carved and inlaid, and all of great value.⁴⁴

No mention is made of any paintings in this extravagant setting, but that there could have been a picture portraying the mistress of the house *all' antica* is not inconceivable.

Whether or not these women did, in fact, commission pictures of themselves (as an illustration in David Kunzle's book *The History of the Comic Strip* suggested, showing a courtesan sitting for a portrait of herself as the goddess Minerva or an Amazon, which looks nothing like her), other people, mostly upper-class males did commission such

pictures.⁴⁵ From *The Anonimo* come notes made on the artwork in the home of Messer Andrea di Odoni of Venice. The description, taken down in 1532, says, in part:

In the court downstairs. The colossal marble head of Hercules. . . . The marble figure of a woman entirely draped, headless and handless, in antique. . . . The many other marble heads and figures . . . are antique.⁴⁶

That the taste was for things of classical antiquity, at least in one's courtyard, is here evident. But, "In the room upstairs," the notes continue, "the oil picture with the two half-length figures of a girl and an old woman behind her [*a ruffiana?*] is by Jacopo Palma." This tantalizing fragment of information, that a painting by Palma Vecchio is hanging in an upstairs room, is embellished by the rest of the passage which describes the room as a bedroom, concluding with "the large figure of a woman, nude, lying down, painted on the back of the bed, is by Gerolamo Savoldo of Brescia."⁴⁷ Certainly, having no further description of the painting by Palma Vecchio, we cannot conclude that this boudoir picture was, in fact, one of this group we are considering, but we can speculate that this was one of the pictures which were painted for primarily private viewing, undoubtedly an intimate picture which would compliment the large nude lying down painted on the bed.

And indeed, a letter from Aretino to Federigo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, dated August 6, 1527, deals with just this subject of bedroom decoration. He writes:

I understand that the most rare Messer Jacopo Sansovino is about to embellish your bedchamber with a statue of Venus so true to life and so living that it will fill with lustful thoughts the mind of anyone who looks at it, and I have told Sebastino, that miraculous painter, that you want him to make you a painting of anything that pleases him just so long as it is not of some hypocritical religious subject.⁴⁸

We know that Titian painted many allegorical pictures of aristocratic patrons during this time, and the overtly erotic quality of these pictures has been recognized by many historians, including Charles Hope and David Rosand.⁴⁹ That these clients would also appreciate and commission images of young "goddesses" in the same sensual style would not be unlikely.

We do have a record of one such commission. Crowe and Cavalcaselle note that Don Diego de Mendoza, Spanish ambassador to Venice, had

had Titian do a picture of "the lady of his devotion" and that Aretino had also written these lines for her:

Furtivamente Titiano et amore
 Presi a gara i pennelli, e le quadrella
 Duo essempi han' fatto d'una Donna bella
 E sacra ti al Mendoza aureo Signore
 Ond' egli altier di si divin favore
 Per seguir' cotal Dea, come sua Stella;
 Con cerimonie appartenenti a quella
 L'une in camera tien, l'altro nel core.⁵⁰

With one image in his heart and the other on the wall of his chambers, the Spanish ambassador could remember his "donna bella" in his repose.

Whether these images were actual portraits of specific beauties or rather idealized composites of the contemporary standards of beauty we cannot know for sure. Some idealization, especially in the depiction of a goddess of love or a goddess of flowers would be likely, but a quick glance at the many half-length views of these women does show a certain individuality in their features which adds to their general intimacy. These idealized portraits, including Titian's *Flora* and Palma Vecchio's *La Flora* then, can be seen as a genre of pictorial images casting the young professional beauties of the day as goddesses, and some as the goddess *Flora, all' antica*.

In this paper I have argued that the loose hair, clothing en déshabillé, and exposed breasts of the models in these paintings denotes an erotic pose in the manner of a goddess of antiquity. I have also argued that in some cases, the title of *Flora*, carrying Boccaccio's connotation of prostitute, further defined the goddess, and that the only class of women who would have posed for such pictures were those of dubious reputation who consorted with and cultivated the company of artists and poets—namely the courtesans.

I have further argued that these pictures were commissioned by men to hang in their private chambers, that they were valued for their erotic qualities, and that the beauty of the picture could be appreciated whether or not one knew the young woman personally. I have concluded that both Titian's *Flora* and Palma Vecchio's *La Flora* are a part of this larger group of pictures, and that their titles of "Flora" are at

best secondary identifications, their first, simply, "Portrait of a Young Lady" probably being more accurate.

These images of cinquecento Venetian woman, painted by men for men, elevated the ideal of beauty to the status of goddess, put it on a pedestal for erotic delectation, and used the young women of a certain class for their own sensual pleasures.

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Notes

1. Margaret L. King and Albert Rabil, Jr., *Her Immaculate Hand. Selected Works By and About the Women Humanists of Quattrocento Italy* (New York: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1983), pp. 92–105.
2. Giovanni Boccaccio, *Concerning Famous Women (De Claris Mulieribus)*, trans. Guido A. Guarino (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1963), p. 215.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 216.
4. Julius Held, "Flora, Goddess and Courtesan" In *Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky*, ed. M. Meiss (New York, 1961), pp. 201–18.
5. Harold Edwin Wethey, *The Paintings of Titian*. (London: Phaidon Press Ltd., 1971), vol. I, p. 154. Held, "Flora," p. 212.
6. Giovanni Mariacher, *Palma Il Vecchio* (Milan: Bramante Editrice, 1968), p. 74.
7. The variations include, among others: "Portrait of a Lady," "Portrait of a Woman," "A Courtesan," "La Bella Gatta" (later "Violante"), "The Sibyl," and others.
8. Charles Hope, *Titian* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), p. 61.
9. Held, "Flora," p. 212.
10. Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Artists*, trans. George Bull (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1965), pp. 460–61.
11. George Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), reprinted in 1976, pp. 134–45.
12. Emma Mellencamp, "A Note on the Costume of Titian's *Flora*," *The Art Bulletin*, June 1969, 51:174–177.
13. Jacob Burckhardt, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. III (Basel: Benno Schwabe & Co., 1955, 5th ed.), p. 249, note 3. The German quote to which she is referring goes: "Die Brauttracht bei der Verlobung—Weiss, mit aufgelöst über die Schultern Wallendem Haare—ist die von Tizans *Flora*."

14. Robert J. Clements and Lorna Levant, ed. and trans., *Renaissance Letters, Revelations of a World Reborn* (New York: New York University Press, 1976), p. 407.
15. Thomas Caldecot Chubb, *The Letters of Pietro Aretino* (New York: Archon Books, 1967), pp. 304–05. Chubb used the edition of Aretino's letters published by Matteo il Maestro, 1601 (Paris: Sign of the Four Elements), choosing 261 of them from the 3,000 to 4,000 available.
16. J. A. Crowe and G. B. Cavalcaselle, *The Life and Times of Titian* (London: John Murray, 1881), 2nd edition, vol. II, p. 55.
17. Chubb, *Aretino*, p. 243.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 263–64.
19. Hope, *Titian*, pp. 57–8.
20. Chubb, *Aretino*, p. 308.
21. Georgina Masson, *Courtesans of the Italian Renaissance* (London: Secket & Warburg, 1975), p. 151. Ms. Masson uses many primary sources, but as she does not footnote her comments, many times the sources are impossible to discern, as in this case. She uses four different sources for Italian letter collections.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 20–25. Here the primary source is *Dialogo di Zoppino Fatto Frate e Ludovico Puttaniere*, either by Pietro Aretino or Francesco Delicado.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 99.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 98–99.
25. Chubb, *Aretino*, p. 361.
26. Masson, *Courtesans*, p. 147. This *trentuno reale* is supposed to have taken place on the 6th of April, 1531, when Angela was very young.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 66, 36.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 27–8. Source: *Dialogo di Zoppino*.
29. Iris Origo, *The World of San Bernardino* (London: The Reprint Society, Ltd., 1964), pp. 47–52, 65.
30. Masson, *Courtesans*, p. 65.
31. Jay Williams, *The World of Titian c. 1488–1576* (New York: Time-Life Books, 1968), p. 106.
32. Chubb, *Aretino*, pp. 159, 262.
33. Mirella Levi-d'Ancona, *The Garden of the Renaissance* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1977), p. 323. Source: *De Plantis*, p. 73.
34. *Ibid.*, pp. 330 ff.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
36. Joel Schmidt, *Larousse Greek and Roman Mythology* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1980), p. 106.
37. Held, "Flora," pp. 202–04 ff.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 209.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 203, note 18.
40. Edgar Wind, *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co, Inc., 1958, 1968 Edition), p. 115.

41. Held, "Flora," p. 204.
42. Wethey, *Titian*, vol. I, p. 26.
43. Wind, *Pagan Mysteries*, p. 114.
44. Matteo Bandello, *Le Novelle del Bandello* (London: Presso Riccardo Bancker, 1791-93).
45. David Kunzle, *The History of the Comic Strip*, vol. I (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), p. 279.
46. Marcantonio Michiel, *The Anonimo*, trans. Paolo Mussi (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1903. Reissued 1969), p. 96.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 99.
48. Chubb, *Aretino*, pp. 32-33.
49. Charles Hope, "Problems of Interpretation in Titian's Erotic Paintings" in *Tiziano e Venezia: Convegno Internazionale di Studi*, 1980): 111-124. Another article on this topic is David Rosand, "Ermeneutica Amorosa: Observations on the Interpretation of Titian's Venuses," in the same book, pp. 375-81.
50. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *The Life and Times*, Vol. II, p. 50. The source they are using here was unpublished at the time, numbered ii, 314. It was a letter from the thousands of Aretino's.